WINCHESTER NEWS
A TRUSTED AND RELIABLE SOURCE OF LOCAL NEWS

NEWS

Planning Board Votes to Hire Town Planner

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

August 1, 2023 . 6:16 PM — 2 min read

By Richard Rohan

August 1 - After eight months without a town planner following the departure of Brian Szekely, the Winchester Planning Board, in a Monday afternoon meeting, voted 4-1-0 to offer the full time planner

Subscribe

position to Taylor Herman. Herman was one of three candidates elevated to the interview stage of the process by the screening committee from the second round of applicants. Another interviewee was deemed by the Planning Board to not be a good fit for the Town's needs and a third candidate did not respond to repeated attempts to schedule an interview. The first round of screening resulted in a single candidate being interviewed, who ultimately accepted a different job offer.

The Planning Board discussed several options ranging from offering Herman a series of three-month part-time positions (while continuing to search for a full-time planner) to hiring Herman as the full-time planner with a probationary period. The hesitancy to offering Herman the full-time position was summed up by Planning Board member I-Ching Scott. "I think the main issue is the lack of actual planning experience and formal planning training." On the other hand, she further stated "I do think that we need somebody ASAP and he is qualified to do a lot of the things that we do need to do really quickly."

Herman has a master's degree in architecture and experience in urban planning, plus he's the founder and president of Desire Plan, an organization formed to help local communities "with the tools, information, and expertise needed to make informed decisions to better the future planning and development of their own neighborhoods.

Very early in the discussion board member Nick Rossettos voiced the opinion that the search for a full-time planner should reopened while acknowledging the "dire circumstances" that the board finds itself in without any professional staff support. Much of the discussion centered around the length of a part-time contract, and the probationary period for the full-time position in regards to 2024 Spring Town Meeting when the Planning Board intends to bring forward zoning articles in response to the Commonwealth's MBTA Section 3A zoning requirements. "It's a t[illegible] framework," stated Board member Kerri Layton, referring to the thing.

Subscribe

John Suhrbier, chair of the Winchester Housing Partnership Board and a member of the screening committee, spoke to the paucity of highly qualified candidates. "Many community and state organizations are having difficulty hiring people, with some people telling me that in the current political environment...fewer people are choosing to work in the public sector. This translates into fewer applications, and fewer applications from very highly qualified and experienced people." In the end, the Board voted 4-1-0 to offer the full-time position to Herman with a 6-month probationary period. Board member Rossettos, the lone dissenting vote, concluded the nearly 90-minute meeting said that he "definitely supports his (Herman's) being successful."

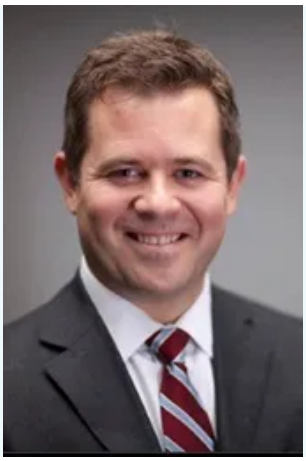
External links: Winchester Planning Board July 31, 2023
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYmuZ9BZet

Richard Rohan is a Precinct 2 Town Meeting Member.

Related

NEWS

Winchester School Committee candidates bring contrasting backgrounds to Thursday forum



NEWS

Rep. Michael Day helps House colleagues pass sweeping affordability bill

Subscribe

Two candidates for Winchester's School Committee will face voters at a forum as the district navigates a new literacy curriculum, budget pressures and questions about student mental health. Heather von Mering and John Bellaire are competing for an open seat on the School Committee, which oversees a budget von

WILL DOWD | STAFF WRITER
March 4, 2026

The following was submitted by the Office of Rep. Michael S. Day: Rep. Michael S. Day and his colleagues in the House of Representatives recently passed energy affordability legislation that would result in over $9 billion in savings for utility ratepayers over the next 10 years. The bill maintains critical

March 4, 2026

NEWS

Winchester gun owners face new training rules starting April 2

Public safety data How Winchester compares on firearms licenses in comparable Massachusetts communities Active licenses as of Jan. 25, 2025 — Source: Massachusetts Criminal History Systems Board License to carry firearms Firearms identification card Winchester and Marblehead are the focus communities. Peers selected based on comparable population size, demographics and suburban

WILL DOWD | STAFF WRITER
March 4, 2026

NEWS

Sen. Jason Lewis, Mass. Senate strengthen fair housing protections for renters, buyers

The following was submitted by the Office of Sen. Jason Lewis: State Sen. Jason Lewis joined his colleagues in the Massachusetts Senate to pass legislation that protects residents from discrimination in the housing market as the Trump administration abandons its enforcement of the federal Fair Housing Act. Illegal discrimination continues

March 3, 2026

Latest

Subscribe

EVENTS

Celebrate Women's History Month with Girls Leading Change

The following was submitted by the Network for Social Justice: To mark Women's History Month and International Women's Day in 2026, the Network for Social Justice is collaborating with club leaders from Winchester High School and members of the Community Health team from La Colaborativa in Chelsea and

March 4, 2026

NEWS

Winchester School Committee candidates bring contrasting backgrounds to Thursday forum

Two candidates for Winchester's School Committee will face voters at a forum as the district navigates a new literacy curriculum, budget pressures and questions about student mental health. Heather von Mering and John Bellaire are competing for an open seat on the School Committee, which oversees a budget von

WILL DOWD | STAFF WRITER

March 4, 2026

FEATURES

'Chicago: Teen Edition' dances onto the Winchester High School stage

By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester

EVENTS

Ripley Chapel in Winchester presents 'Syldason: You Are Welcome Here'

Subscribe

The following was submitted by the Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church: On

High School presents “Chicago: Teen Edition,” a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. This iconic production is set in the 1920s. Performances will take place on March 13 and 14

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS
March 4, 2026

Friday, March 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m., live in-person and live streamed from the stunning Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church, Winchester, 21 Church St., join in with Syldason, a duo concert featuring Sylvie Zakarian,

March 4, 2026

WINCHESTER NEWS
A TRUSTED AND RELIABLE SOURCE OF LOCAL NEWS

Subscribe to Winchester News

© 2026 Winchester News Group, Inc. Copying and sharing with permission for non-commercial use only.

Subscribe